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ECO-TERRORIST CONVICTED

Sacramento federal jury convicts Eric McDavid with conspiracy to commit domestic terrorism

SACRAMENTO-- United States Attorney McGregor W. Scott and FBI Special Agent in Charge Drew S. Parenti announced today that a federal jury returned a guilty verdict against ERIC McDAVID, 29, of Foresthill, California, for conspiracy to damage or destroy property by fire and an explosive. McDAVID's two co-conspirators previously pled guilty to conspiracy and agreed to cooperate with the government in the prosecution of McDAVID. ZACHARY JENSON and LAUREN WEINER entered guilty pleas on July 19, 2006 and May 30, 2006, respectively. Their sentencing dates are pending.

This case is the product of an extensive investigation by various federal, state, and local law enforcement agencies comprising the FBI Joint Terrorism Task Force (JTTF), as well as assistance from the United States Forest Service and the California Department of Fire and Forestry.

United States Attorney Scott stated, "We are gratified by the jury's verdict in this very significant case and thank the members of the jury for their service. Eric McDavid and others like him choose to put innocent civilian lives in jeopardy for the sake of advancing their own extreme views. The Environmental Liberation Front, or ELF, is not only misdirected in its tactics, it is a danger to the community."

Special Agent in Charge Drew S. Parenti, Federal Bureau of Investigation, stated, "The FBI and its partners on the JTTF will continue to aggressively pursue those individuals and groups who espouse violence as a means of expressing their radical views on environmental issues. Once those individuals cross the line from free speech to criminal activity they must be prepared for law enforcement to take swift and appropriate action."

According to Assistant United States Attorneys R. Steven Lapham and Ellen V. Endrizzi, who prosecuted the case, McDAVID, JENSON, and WEINER conspired between June 2005 and January 13, 2006 to maliciously damage or destroy, or attempt to do so, by fire or an explosive, government- and privately-owned commercial property. Targets included the United States

Forest Service Institute of Forest Genetics, the Nimbus Dam and Fish Hatchery, cellular telephone towers, and electric power stations.

In furtherance of the conspiracy, McDAVID, JENSON, and WEINER took a number of substantial steps to accomplish the object of the conspiracy. During the weekend of November 18-20, 2005, McDAVID, JENSON, and WEINER met, in the presence of a confidential source, at McDAVID's parents' residence in Foresthill, California and conducted a planning meeting during which they identified potential targets of destruction. Following that meeting, WEINER ordered the book Poor Man's James Bond, which contains recipes and instructions for creating explosive devices. That book was later seized from the defendants' rented cabin in Dutch Flat, California.

As part of their plan, the defendants reunited in January 2006 at the cabin to begin the actual work on their bombing campaign. On January 10, 2006, McDAVID, JENSON, and WEINER, in the presence of a confidential source, visited the Nimbus Dam and Nimbus Fish Hatchery, and later that day visited the United States Forest Service Institute of Forest Genetics, to perform reconnaissance on those prospective targets for destruction. During the latter visit, McDavid drew a map of the facilities, noting the location of surveillance cameras. On January 11, 2006, all of the defendants, in the presence of a confidential source, traveled to a store in Sacramento to purchase ingredients necessary for the creation of an explosive device, including three bottles of bleach, a hot-plate, glassware, a gasoline can, a car battery, potassium chloride, and three jars of petroleum jelly. Finally, on January 12, 2006, the defendants purchased additional items, including gunpowder and trick party candles, to construct an improvised fuse. On that same day, the defendants began mixing the ingredients they had purchased in accordance with a receipt that they thought would lead to the creation of an explosive. As they did so, McDavid used a watch to calculate the burn time for the improvised fuse that he had fashioned from gun powder and trick candles.

McDAVID, JENSON, and WEINER were arrested on January 13, 2006 outside a retail store in Auburn, California, shortly after they had purchased additional items necessary for the creation of an explosive.

McDAVID faces a maximum term of incarceration of 20 years, with a minimum term of five years. Defendant McDavid would also face a three-year term of supervised release and a \$250,000 fine. However, the actual sentence will be determined at the discretion of the court after consideration of the Federal Sentencing Guidelines, which take into account a number of variables, and any applicable statutory sentencing factors.

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